

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the claims to cancel certain of the claims and conform with requirements of form expressly set forth in the Office Action dated August 27, 2003. For example, features of former claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, have been included in claim 1, and claim 16 has been cancelled.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8, 14-15, and 24-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,506,198 to Amano ("Amano"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended both to return to its form as originally filed and to include features of claim 16. Claim 16 was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. With regard to the portion of the amendment that returns claim 1 to its form as originally filed, Applicant submits that the scope of amended claim 1 is at least as broad as both original and previously amended claims 1 and that all range of equivalents still applies. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

In addition, claims 2-8, 14-15, and 24-25 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 2-8, 14-15, and 24-25 be withdrawn.

Further, new claim 26 was added to better define the invention and includes features of cancelled claim 7. Claim 26 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that claim 26 be allowed.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Amano in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,126,668 to Bair et al. ("Bair"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include features of claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claim 9 also be withdrawn.

Claims 10-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Amano in view of Bair and in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,665,914 to Tanne ("Tanne"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include features of claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 10-12 depend indirectly from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 10-12 also be withdrawn.

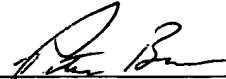
Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Amano in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,133,726 to Ruiz et al. ("Ruiz"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include features of claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 13 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claim 13 also be withdrawn.

Claims 16-17 and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Amano in view of Ruiz and in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,659,584 to Schilk ("Schilk"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include features of claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 16 was cancelled, and claims 17 and 21 were amended to depend from amended claim 1. Claims 17 and 21-23 depend from claim 1, directly or indirectly, and include all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 16-17 and 21-23 also be withdrawn.

Claims 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Amano in view of Schilk and in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,462,739 to Dan et al. ("Dan"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to further prosecution in the present application, claim 1 has been amended to include features of claim 16, which was indicated by the Examiner as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 18-20 depend indirectly from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1, plus additional features. Therefore, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 18-20 also be withdrawn.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the present application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 222-8101 if there are any outstanding issues that could be resolved through a telephone conference.

Respectfully submitted,



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